

Mobility International USA (MIUSA)

Building an Inclusive Development Community: Gender Appropriate Technical Assistance to InterAction Member Agencies on Inclusion of People with Disabilities

USAID Cooperative Agreement Award No. GEW-A-00-01-00012-00

Performance Report

Project Third Quarter: April - June, 2002

Project goals

To increase participation by people with disabilities, especially women and girls with disabilities, in InterAction member agencies as participants, staff, administrators and beneficiaries.

To increase implementation of the Disability Amendments to the InterAction PVO Standards by InterAction member agencies, regarding inclusion of people with disabilities, especially women and girls with disabilities in organizational governance, management and programs.

Summary: Project progress and accomplishments

During the third quarter of the *Building an Inclusive Development Community Project*, MIUSA's International Development and Disability Department (IDD) has made significant progress toward meeting the project goals and objectives:

- Assessment interviews have been completed and/or scheduled with four Model Partner Organizations (MPO)
- Template for technical assistance model and curriculum have been developed and field tested.
- Resource materials for technical assistance have been developed
- Logistical arrangements for MPO technical assistance trainings have been confirmed
- Technical assistance trainings have been accomplished with two Model Partner Organizations
- Collaborative activities following up on technical assistance trainings have been undertaken
- Outline for the *Building an Inclusive Development Community Manual* has been refined; materials have been compiled and sections have been written and edited
- Project database has been expanded and updated
- Information requests have received responses and topic-specific information and resource sheets have been developed

- Website has been updated and improved
- Project information has been presented at InterAction West Coast meeting and InterAction Annual Forum

Model Partner Organizations

General summary

A key component of this project is MIUSA's relationships with our Model Partner Organizations. During the third quarter these relationships have intensified and resulted in significant momentum for the project. MPO staff members and CEOs have responded positively and demonstrated energetic commitment to the project's goals, in face to face meetings with IDD staff and follow-up communication to plan and strategize the three-year partnerships.

During the third quarter IDD staff finished in-depth assessment interviews with Holt International Children's Services and Mercy Corps International and conducted preliminary assessment interviews with the Trickle Up Program and the American Friends Service Committee.

IDD staff has been successful in scheduling assessment interviews with appropriate staff and CEOs (in person and by phone) and scheduling introductory technical assistance trainings for four MPOs. Interview and technical assistance dates were dependent on the MPO's schedules, taking into consideration their travel and program priorities. The schedule is included with this report.

Technical Assistance Curriculum

IDD refined the technical assistance curriculum based on assessment information and feedback from MPOs. Currently, the basic design includes three initial components:

1) Introduction and Project Overview

The introductory session is designed for participation by the full MPO staff. An endorsement by the Model Partner Organization's CEO establishes commitment of the organization to the project and sets a cooperative tone for the discussion. IDD staff present an overview of MIUSA, the goals and methods of the *Building an Inclusive Development* Community project, basic statistical information about people with disabilities worldwide and an overview of InterAction, US and international policy addressing disability rights. MPO staff is introduced to human rights perspectives on disability, and participate in a visioning exercise designed to demonstrate how inclusion of people with disabilities positively impacts the organization's structures and programming.

2) Human Resources and Administrative Issues

The second technical assistance component targets human resources and administrative staff of each Model Partner Organization. Co-facilitated by IDD staff and professionals in the human resources field who are knowledgeable about the ADA and disability issues, this component provides information, opportunities for discussion, interactive exercises and referral to resources relevant to interviewing and hiring of people with disabilities as staff, volunteers and interns. Responding to assessment feedback from MPOs, MIUSA compiled a human resources “toolbox” publication (included with this report), which is reviewed and discussed during the session. Program planners discuss strategies for inclusion of women and men with disabilities from the beginning of the program planning process, incorporating program accessibility and costs of reasonable accommodation into funding proposals.

3) Program issues

The third MPO technical assistance component is designed to address issues relevant to program staff and field programs. Because each organization varies widely in its mission, goals and methods, MIUSA will tailor the technical assistance session and follow-on services in the program area to specifically address the needs of each Model Partner Organization. In the case of Holt International Children’s Services, IDD will design an additional technical assistance curriculum and follow-on services to respond to the specific needs of the Social Services department.

Mercy Corps

IDD staff conducted the first technical assistance session with Mercy Corps International on May 29th, following two assessment meetings with MCI Chief Executive Officer and more than 20 senior staff and program officers. The curriculum included a ninety-minute presentation, with a video and interactive discussions. The introductory session was followed by a ninety-minute technical assistance session for human resources and administrative staff.

Evaluation comments indicate that the technical assistance sessions were successful in providing information and securing organizational commitment of MCI staff and administration to the project. Overall, the vast majority of people who filled out an evaluation rated the technical assistance to be highly effective (62%) or very effective (36%). The most common suggestion for improvement was to have more time available for the session. IDD staff will actively follow up on requests for information and action planning with Mercy Corps staff. A summary of the evaluations of the technical assistance sessions is included with this report.

Ongoing communication and increased collaboration between MCI and MIUSA have been significant outcomes of the technical assistance sessions. MCI has requested information, resources and advice on a number of issues, and, with IDD, has generated a list of collaborative possibilities for networking and future projects. For example:

- Mercy Corps is planning a Health Forum in Portland this September and has invited MIUSA to conduct a session on health issues faced by people with disabilities.
- A program officer from Mercy Corps contacted IDD staff to explore avenues for working together and to request contacts for disability organizations in the country of the proposal.
- Another Mercy Corps' program officer contacted IDD staff about a possible new microcredit program in Zimbabwe. MIUSA provided MCI with disabled women's contacts in Zimbabwe.
- IDD staff connected Mercy Corps field staff in Afghanistan with Will Kennedy Smith, a prominent physician who is working on policy and service delivery issues related to disability in Afghanistan. Dr. Smith is a member of the International Watch Committee of the National Council on Disability.

IDD staff expects that more opportunities to network and collaborate will develop as the depth of our MPO partnerships continue to grow.

Mercy Corps' CEO, Neil Keny-Guyer, has agreed to write an endorsement letter that will be used with other letters of endorsement, as a sample statement of organizational commitment to the inclusion of people with disabilities in all aspects of international development.

Holt International Children's Services

Following assessment interviews with Holt's CEO and more than 15 senior staff members, IDD staff conducted the first technical assistance training for Holt's headquarters staff in Eugene, Oregon on June 12th. The session was videotaped so that staff in five branch offices could benefit from the curriculum. IDD staff utilized a similar curriculum as with Mercy Corps but made changes to fit Holt's mission and programs. Again, evaluations reflected a very high rating: 57% rated the session as highly effective, and another 30% rated it very effective. Suggestions for improvement again included wanting more time for discussion as well as requests for more specific strategies to facilitate changes in attitudes about disabilities in field program countries. Subsequent technical assistance will focus on specific action plans with steps and benchmarks to address staff's ideas, concerns and questions. MIUSA's MPO relationship with Holt has also generated collaboration in this first phase of the project. For example:

- Holt's Director of International Programs in Africa and India requested a list of disability NGO contacts in Uganda for potential collaboration on a newly developed program. IDD staff was able to provide a list of contacts in that country.
- IDD staff was also able to provide key contacts in Vietnam for Holt field staff.

- IDD staff was requested to review materials for Holt's Social Service program and provided feedback and resources for their information packets, website and publications.

Holt's CEO, Dr. John Williams, has written an enthusiastic endorsement letter for this project, which is included with this report. This letter will also be utilized to write a sample statement to be included in the "Building an Inclusive Development Community" Manual.

The Trickle Up Program

Technical assistance dates have been set for Trickle Up staff, and an initial face-to-face interview was conducted with Trickle Up's Executive Director, Richenda Van Leeuwen. Subsequent interviews will be held on the phone with key staff. In addition, Trickle Up's Program Officer for Africa has provided field reports from Trickle Up projects in Uganda, South Africa, Ethiopia and Tanzania that have experience including women with disabilities, and will collaborate with IDD to collect more detailed information during summer field visits about experiences of people with disabilities in economic development projects. IDD will work with Trickle Up to compile and disseminate lessons learned and recommendations from Trickle Up's experiences. This information will be useful in Year Two of the project as we design a curriculum to transfer technical assistance to the field offices, and Trickle Up "best practices" will be disseminated in the "Success Stories" publication in Year Three.

American Friends Service Committee

IDD staff conducted a face-to-face assessment interview with AFSC's Director of affirmative action. This meeting provided basic information about AFSC's principles and non-discrimination policies, volunteer committees and international programs. AFSC is progressive in their awareness of disability inclusiveness. Their organizational literature promotes AFSC's programs and policies that reflect their inclusionary practices, for example documentation of their program in Cambodia working to integrate people with disabilities into the community and a pamphlet of queries, or questions on disability issues. AFSC will have several "best practices" to contribute to the "Success Stories" publication. Additional assessment phone interviews have been scheduled with six AFSC personnel.

A fifth potential MPO, the International Rescue Committee (IRC), notified MIUSA on May 22nd of their decision to rescind their commitment to participate in the project as a Model Partner Organization. IRC is experiencing a "significant period of transition" due to new organizational leadership. IRC did send a study they had completed regarding the prevalence of disability in a refugee camp in Pakistan, which IDD staff is reviewing. IRC has other projects that will be included in our "Success Stories" publication in Year Three. We hope to continue our relationship with IRC in the future.

IDD staff expects to select and begin working with our fifth MPO by the end of July.

InterAction

IDD staff has discussed scheduling of technical assistance sessions in the coming months for InterAction staff with InterAction Vice-President, Ken Giunta. InterAction staff has been very receptive to and supportive of this project, as demonstrated by information that they have provided related to InterAction member agencies, by working with IDD staff to educate InterAction members about the Disability Amendments of the PVO Standards, by helping MIUSA to publicize the project in the *Monday Developments* publication and at InterAction meetings. InterAction's support to the project has been invaluable and is greatly appreciated.

Technical Assistance Curriculum and Materials

Building an Inclusive Development Community: A Manual on Including People with Disabilities in International Development Programs

During the third quarter, IDD staff continued to refine the manual outline, compiled materials and began the process of editing sections of the Manual. Utilizing the expertise of consultant-writers identified during the previous quarter, IDD staff adapted the manual outline and identified new resources to address issues brought up in MPO assessments and technical assistance sessions. The Manual will be designed to be a dynamic publication that will assist organizations to address their unique needs toward the goal of including people with disabilities. Manual sections completed this quarter included information and resources related to human resources management and the inclusion of people with disabilities. These pieces, some of which have already been put to use as part of MPO technical assistance in the form of the Human Resources Toolbox, include:

- ADA overview
- Alternative Formats for people who are Blind or Visually Impaired
- Accessible Communication for people who are Deaf or Hearing Impaired
- Budgeting for Inclusion
- Disability Definitions and Descriptions
- Tips for Appropriate Language
- Checklist for Existing Facilities
- Recruiting staff, volunteers and interns with disabilities
- Field offices: developing partnerships
- Insurance issues
- Transportation issues

Manual sections related to program delivery written by consultants this quarter included:

- Community based rehabilitation
- Reproductive health issues for women with disabilities
- Family planning for women with disabilities
- Disabled women and girls' health

- Multilateral Development Banks and disability inclusion
- Including people with disabilities in development policy agenda
- Including people with disabilities in international development initiatives, Asia-Pacific Region perspective
- Best inclusionary practices by international development organizations
- Appropriate technology
- Agriculture and disability
- Utilizing a gender appropriate lens within disability inclusiveness strategies

New sections underway this quarter include a sample Statement of Organizational Commitment to Disability Inclusion by MPO executive directors, and sample Organizational Action Plans. During the next quarter IDD staff will refine the design of the Manual and will add new materials, including an organizational self-assessment (see below).

Disability Checklist: Organizational Self-Assessment on Gender-Appropriate and Gender-Fair Inclusion of People with Disabilities

IDD staff designed and field-tested a tool to assess MPOs' baseline compliance with the InterAction Disability Amendments to the PVO Standards. IDD staff is currently revising the checklist based on the field test experience, streamlining the design and content to serve as a self-assessment tool for MPOs and other InterAction member agencies. The Disability Checklist will be published as a stand-alone document as well as incorporated into the Manual, with assessment items linked to relevant information, examples and recommendations in the Manual.

Information Services

Information Resources

IDD staff continues to collect and catalogue information and resources for the project database, technical assistance curriculum, Manual and website. Consultants contracted to write manual chapters have proven invaluable in supplying topic-specific expertise, information and resources. The West Coast Regional InterAction Forum and the Annual Forum in D.C. were excellent opportunities to tap the experience of fellow InterAction members, resulting in stories and contacts for future "Best Practices" case studies. For example, Solar Cookers International described a particular stove whose unique design has been popular among people with disabilities, as it eliminates the need to search for firewood. A discussion of the implications for people with disabilities of this particular design will be included in the Manual's section on accessible technology.

Alumni of MIUSA's programs have also supplied valuable information and insights. One alumna from Mozambique shared her observations from her disaster relief experience, during which the government made no consideration of people with disabilities in disaster relief after devastating floods. She recounts how she confronted government

officials responding to the disaster and apprised them of how they might better address the situation. Her insight and recommendations will be included in a section on considering people with disabilities in disaster relief.

In addition to gathering new resources, IDD staff has been working to identify how best to disseminate different kinds of information. Each topic is evaluated to determine which format would be most accessible and useful to project beneficiaries (i.e. as a resource sheet given out as requests related to the subject arise, included in a technical assistance exercise, or included as a section of the website or the manual).

Database Development

Throughout the third quarter IDD staff has continued to expand and update records in the database. Organizations catalogued in the database will serve as referrals for MPOs and other InterAction member agencies to organizations of individuals with disabilities, especially women with disabilities, in field countries who will be available to provide gender appropriate assistance, information, technical assistance and technical assistance on inclusion of people with disabilities to field office staff. By the end of the third quarter more than 70 records had been updated and approximately 50 new records had been entered. In order to streamline the process of identifying new organizations to enter into the database, IDD staff has developed a questionnaire designed to collect new information. These questionnaires are sent to select organizations that have made inquiries, organizations identified as likely candidates through Internet searches, or organizations referred by colleagues. IDD staff has continued to refine and revise data entry protocol to standardize the information for each entry recorded.

With the completion of a new intake screen IDD staff has been able to catalogue each request for information and technical assistance. MIUSA's information specialist has incorporated technical improvements to generate reports, enabling IDD staff to evaluate information requests and responses, identify commonly requested information, and to design materials to streamline responses to information requests.

Inquiries and information requests have steadily increased throughout the first three quarters. IDD staff anticipates that this number will grow dramatically. Reports generated show that the majority of inquiries come from international disability organizations (38%), followed closely by US-based international development organizations (32%). Of those international development organizations, 20% were made by InterAction members, of which 15% were MPOs. Government organizations, individuals with disabilities, or individuals with unknown disability status made the remaining requests. Requests covered a variety of topics ranging from identifying funding sources, to locating disability contacts in various countries. Four such inquiries were of particular interest:

- Opportunities Industrialization Centers International (OIC), an InterAction member requested consultancy in the areas of vocational rehabilitation, leadership, disability rights and advocacy for a project targeting people with

amputated limbs in Sierra Leone. IDD staff was able to respond with resources to meet this request.

- Refugees International, another InterAction member, requested information about organizations that work with refugees with disabilities. IDD staff was able to use resources collected for a manual chapter and consult with colleagues at UNHCR to provide a list of resources.
- Mercy Corps International, an MPO partner, requested information on funding to ship wheelchairs to Mongolia. IDD staff developed an “infosheet” on transporting mobility aids and organizations that collect and ship wheelchairs to developing world countries.
- A representative of IREX, a US-based international development organization working in a field office in Uzbekistan requested information on creating an accessible Internet resource center for people with disabilities. IDD staff provided a list of websites and contacts related to the subject, and referred the individual to several disability organizations in the country that would be able to provide consultancy services.

IDD staff will be distributing evaluation forms that will provide those making requests with an opportunity to comment on the usefulness of the resources sent and suggest ways of improving the service and content. In the meantime, IDD staff has received informal feedback on information requests. For example, one individual from Mercy Corps requested a list of disability organization contacts in El Salvador for a housing project they were developing in the region. One of the project coordinators uses a wheelchair. After receiving the list of contacts from MIUSA she sent the following response.

“Thank you for this info. It was great timing bc [because] the El S [El Salvador] team was here yesterday and I was meeting with them about gender and mobility in their project! I look forward to seeing how this project develops and I hope MC [Mercy Corps] and MIUSA will be able to work together on some aspect of it.”

IDD Website Development

The IDD website now gives international development organizations access to a searchable database containing over four hundred disability NGOs worldwide. This valuable resource will enable US-based NGOs to research contacts in the areas where they have field staff, programs and services or where they are considering developing projects. The resource section is being expanded and reorganized to include new links, articles and publications. Information sheets are being designed to respond to frequent information requests, and will be made available on the IDD website.

Public Relations

IDD staff developed and implemented a public relations / dissemination plan this period, targeting conference, print and Internet-based media reaching disability and international development audiences.

Conferences

InterAction West Coast Regional Meeting

At the West Coast Regional InterAction meeting in March 2002, Susan Sygall gave a presentation on the *Building an Inclusive Development Community* project to nearly 50 CEO's and other staff of InterAction member agencies. An energetic question and answer period followed the presentation, in which participants indicated a strong interest in increasing inclusion of people with disabilities and in MIUSA's materials and technical assistance services.

InterAction Annual Forum

In June 2002, Susan Sygall and Susie Grimes disseminated information about the *Building an Inclusive Development Community* project to InterAction member agencies and US-based international development professionals, at the annual InterAction Forum in Washington DC. In a workshop on "Assessing Compliance with the PVO Standards, Susan Sygall discussed the InterAction Disability Standards, and described resources and technical assistance services that MIUSA offers to assist InterAction member to comply with the disability standards.

Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID)

IDD successfully proposed a session on including women with disabilities in economic development initiatives, at the AWID International Forum, in Guadalajara, Mexico in October 2002. IDD is currently in conversation with Model Partner Organizations Mercy Corps and Trickle Up regarding their potential participation as panel members in the AWID session. IDD staff member Cindy Lewis will disseminate information about the *Building an Inclusive Development Community* project, and inclusion of women with disabilities in development programs, to InterAction members and other development agencies and professionals at the AWID Forum.

Articles

The following media published press releases or articles this period, highlighting the *Building an Inclusive Development Community* project and IDD projects and services:

Print Publications

InterAction Monday Developments

Paraplegia News

Ecumenical Disability Advocates Network

MIUSA *Over the Rainbow*

Global Fund for Women

Disability Awareness in Action

ISAR *Give and Take*

InterAction also featured the IDD website and the *Building An Inclusive Development Community* project in the “WebWatch” column of *Monday Developments*, InterAction’s semi-monthly newsletter.

Web-based publications

IDDC Website Resource page

AWID -Friday File

Disability World E-zine

Email list-serves

International Watch (US National Disability Organizations)

d-Wild List (International women with disabilities listserve)

Commission on Advancement of Women (CAW) E-News

Upcoming

In the next quarter, Model Partner Organizations Mercy Corps International and Holt International will publish journal and website articles featuring their partnerships with MIUSA and the *Building an Inclusive Development Community* project.

Awards

MIUSA is a proud recipient of the *Mildred Robbins Leet Award for the Advancement of Women*, in recognition of MIUSA’s progress toward greater gender equity in international development. The prestigious honor, awarded at the 2002 Annual InterAction Forum in Washington, DC, honors an individual or organization who exemplifies InterAction’s goal of working to “overcome poverty, exclusion and suffering by advancing social justice and basic dignity for all.” MIUSA was applauded for its commitment to promoting the inclusion of women and girls with disabilities in international exchange and development and for modeling this idea as an organization. Susan Sygall, MIUSA executive director, and Susie Grimes, IDD department manager, accepted the award on MIUSA’s behalf.

MIUSA has been acknowledged locally and nationally for exceptional work on human rights for people with disabilities around the world. On June 7, 2002, at the 25th anniversary celebration of Direction Service, a local disability organization, MIUSA received the Keys to Access Award for being “a vital force for international cooperation

and the absolute inclusion of people with disabilities throughout the world.” Direction Service is a multi-program family support agency located in Eugene, Oregon. Its mission is to assist people with disabilities to live the fullest lives possible.

Conclusion

MIUSA is pleased with the momentum and outcomes of the first three quarters of the Building an Inclusive Development Community project. Evaluation comments following information and referral requests, technical assistance sessions and conference presentations demonstrate that the project has been successful in raising awareness about disability issues and motivating professional interest and organizational commitment to proactive action toward more inclusive practices.

We are particularly excited by the potential for collaboration between MIUSA, our MPOs and other InterAction organizations. The examples of networking outlined in this report demonstrate the potential for cooperation that this project engenders. We are particularly encouraged by the enthusiastic reception that the project has received from administrators and staff of InterAction member agencies. It is clear that InterAction agencies recognize the need for assistance and resources to reverse the trend of exclusion of people with disabilities in international development. The time is indeed right for "building an inclusive development community."

IDD staff wishes to express our thanks for the support of US Agency for International Development and our Cognizant Technical Officer, Edward Lijewski.

Appendices

Human Resources Toolbox

2002 IDD Technical assistance and Conference Schedule

MPO Introduction and HR Technical assistance Agenda-Mercy Corps

MPO Introduction and HR Technical assistance Evaluation Summary-Mercy Corps

MPO Introduction Technical assistance Agenda-Holt International Children’s Services

MPO Introduction Technical assistance Evaluation Summary- Holt International

Children’s Services

Endorsement letter-Holt International Children’s Services CEO- Dr. John L. Williams